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OCCURRENCE SOME IDEAS ON THE POSSIBLE OF TRUE IN THE ELEPHANTS AMERICAS UNTIL A S LATE A S THE AGE O F DISCOVERY

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There have been speculations that, apart from mammoths and mastodons, true elephants may have existed in the Americas, e.g. contemporaneous with the Maya civilization, and even perhaps as late as the European "Age of Discovery" (which, for the Europeans, indeed it was).

ding to the famous cryptozoologist Bernard Heuvelmans, mammoths and/or mastodons survived in North America at least until the 18th century, particularly in Alaska (2).

Of course there is the very real possibility that we have, in said stories, only a collection of confused or mistaken "identifications",

', that Ingram, or the Indian chiefs, failed to recognize the difference between elephants, mammoths and masto-

dons.
Be that as it may, the question could rightly be asked: if
true elephants really were present in the Americas, if the
Mayan sculptors really wanted to depict elephants (and not
and
mammoths or mastodons), and if Ingram
the Indian chiefs
really meant elephants, would that, in itself, be proof that
said American (true) elephants were indigenous to the Ameri-
cas? Couldn't they rather have been imported?
This may sound like a rather wild idea to some. But the idea
is not so "wild" as it may seem, after all. Variants of the
so-called "elephant tablet", on which (it seems) a true ele-
phant is depicted, have been found in Peru as well
enigmatic "Burrows Cave" in North America, and the
thereon has been deciphered by Kurt Schildmann, a
guist, as a version of the Sanskrit script and
ancient India (3).
as in the
inscription
German lin-
language of
We must not forget that the ancient civilizations of India,
and South East Asia generally, were in possession of large
ocean-going fleets with enormous vessels, easily capable to
transport (supposedly young) elephants to distant countries.
The very old and very intimate interconnections between South
East Asia and the Americas have by now been proved ad nauseam.
So, there is nothing intrinsically absurd in the idea of ships
from southern India, Kambodja or Java bringing, presumably as
presents, young elephants to rulers of distant countries like
Peru or Mexico. From where they might have found their way,
also as presents, to the former advanced civilization ("mound
builders") on the territory of what is today the United States
of America (4).
According to the late (former Harvard professor for marine
biology) Barry Fell, "knowledge of elephants was brought to
the New World by voyagers from both east and west" (5). I
would propose that, at least with respect to the west, i.e.
the Pacific, it was not only the knowledge but the real ani-
mals as well. That African vessels arrived at the American
coasts (which doubtless they did on more than one occasion)
with African (even young) elephants on board, I would rather
been inclined to doubt for several reasons. Above all the
African, Black civilizations didn't possess, it seems, ships
of such proportions as did the South East Asian civilizations.
[AD] David INGRAM: Land Travels 1568-1569 from the Rio Minas
in the Gulf of Mexico to Cape Breton in Acadia.
Reprint El Paso 1947.
(2) Bernard HEUVELMANS: Annotated Checklist of Cryptozoology.
Cryptozoology, 5: 1-26, Tucson 1986.
(3) Kurt SCHILDMANN: Zwei Weltsensationen.

Efodon Synesis, 23, 1997.
(4) Roger G. KENNEDY: Die vergessenen Vorfahren. Die Wiederentdeckung der indianischen Hochkulturen Nordamerikas.
Munic 1996.
Barry FELL: America B.C.
New York 1976 (p. 184).
The famous "Ingram Report" (1) is often mentioned in this respect. Ingram had been a British sailor, who in 1568 was ashore on the coast of the Gulf of Mexico and from there velled, by foot, towards the Nortwest, until he reached Atlantic coast, where he was taken on board of a French ship. He reported having seen, in the country he traversed, "elephants", as well as another "monstrous beast" which may, set (1) tra- the or not, refer to a mastodon.
Similar stories were, it is alleged, reported by certain dian chiefs to the "Great White Father", when they visited US president in Washington. This would give a date, elephant stories, of shortly before or after 1800 34 AD. Accor- In- the for these (5) 35